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THE UNREST OF WOMEN

THE
UNREST OF WOMEN

BY

Edward Sandford Martin

Author of

"The Luxury of Children," "Windfalls of Observation,"
"The Reflections of a Beginning Husband," etc.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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THE MAN AMERICA

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I

THE FEMININE UNREST

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

I

THE FEMININE UNREST

THERE is a great deal in print about "the feminine unrest." Whether it is much more prevalent than usual, or only more vocal, it presses on attention and has to be considered. Parents of girls want to know their duty; want to know to what sort of employments and responsibilities they must bring their daughters up. Girls still in school or lately out grope to discover what is expected of them. Are they to be helpers at home or workers independent of their families? Are they to be do-

mestic or extraparietal? Are they to find an outside job for the sake of their own development, or only seek one if they need the wage it will bring them? Shall they go to college if they can, and if not what shall they do next? Shall they marry, and if so whom, and on what terms? What is the life to which they are to adjust themselves? Is it the life of women in the Nineteenth Century, or a new and different life, calling for new plans and proceedings?

These are real questions. All the girls nowadays are more or less confronted by them. Most of them seem to feel more or less uncertain about their destiny; uncertain not as to particulars, but as to generals; uncertain not as to which man and when and where, but whether they must

try to be such women as their mothers were, or shape themselves by some new pattern the outlines of which are not yet clear. So it seems rather a hard time for girls; but the trouble is hardly a trouble at all, for what chiefly makes the disturbance is enlargement of opportunity. Girls have a wider choice than they used to have. Besides the old-time callings of dressmaking, millinery, teaching school and getting married, they can—let's see, let's see—work in factories, laundries, stores; be cashiers; be stenographers or typewriters; be trained nurses or doctors; be telephone girls, indispensable office workers, actresses, writers, librarians, social workers, deans and presidents of colleges; or go into some other business not done at home.

Not many mothers of contemporary girls tried any of these latter employments. The typewriter and the telephone were only invented yesterday; trained nurses belong for the most part to the last quarter-century; "salesladies" are no older. That makes these new fashions in employments for women the more experimental. The wisdom of mothers, a body of knowledge derived from instinct, experience and observation, and of enormous value to human life, is a good deal baffled by them. Indeed it is current doctrine that the live-at-home mothers are not up to the task of looking after all these outworking girls, and that the law—the Government—must undertake it. That is considerably true. This great force of fac-

tory-working, office-keeping, merchandising women is a new feature of civilization, and there must, of course, be proper laws for its regulation and protection.

The girls, as they come along and see this great body of outworking women, say to themselves: "That is what woman's life is coming to be. That is what I must face and prepare for. The old domestic life of housekeeping is going the way of the distaff. What is important now for me is to be qualified to hold a worthwhile place in this new life that is and is to be."

That also is considerably true. But it is not the whole truth. There is a huge body of women in the away-from-home employments, but they are almost all helpers. The princi-

pals and ruling workers are almost all men. Lawyers' offices are full of women, extremely competent and useful, but there are few woman lawyers; there are many trained nurses, but comparatively few woman doctors; there are girls galore on the floors of the department stores, and some women hold excellent positions in them, but a woman in the firm is a great rarity. Women are admirable helpers in business, cheaper than men, more tractable, often more agreeable, but they do not stand on the same level with men in these undomestic employments.

What is the reason?

Does it mean that women have not yet got their full dues in industry?

It does mean that, no doubt, to

some extent; but that is not the reason.

Does it mean that women are not the equals of men?

No; it does not mean that. They are equal.

The reason is this: that all this out-of-the-home work is to man his vocation, but to woman at large no more than her avocation. Her great vocation is motherhood. It is in that that she is indispensable and unrivaled; and in that is the basis of her complete equality with man. In that she is the principal, not only in bearing children, but in rearing and training them as well. That is by so much the most important calling to which women must look forward that for the general run of women all the other employments are of negligible

moment in comparison with it and have to be considered on a basis of their relation to it. To that calling the great mass of women in due time find their way. They marry and have children. The extraparietal wage-earning work that some of them do before marriage may be compared with the years of military service which young men have to give in France and Germany. It is a temporary employment, necessary and often very valuable as a training, but in a field of endeavor from which they expect to withdraw as soon as they can. Like the young soldiers learning the rudiments of war a large majority of the women wage-earners are young girls serving their time in the industrial army, but expecting later to earn their discharge and pro-

ceed to their real business in life. To marry and have children and raise them is the natural destiny of women; the same now that it always was and always will be. It is for that, primarily, that girls should be trained; to that that they should be encouraged to look forward; and their training should be such as will help them to marry wisely, to have children that are worth raising, and to raise them well.

Then what is the unrest all about? For one thing it is an unrest that waits on readjustment. This great intrusion of woman, especially between the ages of seventeen and twenty-seven, in the out-of-the-house employments is a new thing, and a big thing full of problems. In hundreds of thousands of families thought has to be taken not only

about the training of daughters for their ultimate destiny of motherhood, and putting them in the way to realize it, but also about their training for this intermediate work which is for so many of them a necessary preface to marriage, and which will determine a good deal, by their experience in it, what sort of marriages they will make. It is necessary in such families to plan for a girl's wage-earning employment as though it were to be, as it may be, her life's work, and to do it with the knowledge, as a rule, that it ought not to be her life's work, and with the expectation that it won't be. That makes a troublesome problem, and parents' minds and daughters' minds, in the strain of solving it, are apt to let the immediate need cloud their

vision of the remoter and more important destiny. It looks important for a girl to get a good place where she will like her work and do well, but it is much more important that the work shall like her, and that she shall escape from it in time, while she is still capable of fulfilling woman's greater destiny and has not yet become an office fixture.

Moreover it is an unrest that is a part of a great unrest that is affecting all the world, that puts the Young Turks in charge of Turkey, starts a republic in China, and gives power to Asquith and Lloyd-George in England, and that put a third party into our politics last summer. This unrest is a general reaching out for more: for more liberty, more justice, more opportunity, more to eat,

more money to spend, more fun, more leisure, more knowledge. In the masses of the people of the earth there moves a great longing for a better chance and a fuller life. That is a great phenomenon, and, of course, women have their full share of it. The people moved by this general unrest don't know precisely what they want nor how to get it. They don't know at all accurately what is right and what is wrong in the way the world is run at present, nor what resources are available to satisfy their yearnings, nor what instrumentalities of government and justice are defective or obsolete, nor who, nor what, is to blame for distresses or wants or restrictions that they chafe under. Every innovator, every mover for new methods, every vaunter of a new

remedy, finds his opportunity in this prevailing temper of men. Listen to Debs, lately the Socialist candidate for President, in his speech accepting the nomination:

"Capitalism is rushing blindly to its impending doom. All the signs portend the inevitable breakdown of the existing order. Deep-seated discontent has seized upon the masses. Poverty, high prices, unemployment, child slavery, widespread misery and haggard want in a land bursting with abundance; prostitution and insanity, suicide and crime; these in solemn numbers tell the tragic story of capitalism's saturnalia of blood and tears and shame as its end draws near."

When that sort of discourse engages the sympathies of millions, of course there is unrest among women.

There is unrest among women because there is unrest in the air they breathe, but, naturally, it takes its own special forms.

The form that is most conspicuous is the aspiration for the suffrage. A certain proportion of women—how large no one yet knows—have reached the conclusion that they want the vote. That seems to stand in their minds as the evidence of equality with man. Give them the vote and they will see to it that women are paid the same wages as men for the same work, that the factory laws are what they should be, that white slavery is abolished, that child labor is duly guarded and restricted, and, and, and, and. Not only are the suffragists restless themselves, but they also force disturbance on the women,

apparently a large majority, who have found their vocation in life and are fairly satisfied with it, or else see no cure in suffrage for what they don't like, and fear its drawbacks more than they anticipate its benefits. Such women find themselves threatened with political obligations which they think do not belong to them, and which they do not wish to incur, unless they organize their opposition and make it felt. And this some of them are doing, and with energy, though not with much joy in the combat. For, much as they dislike the duty, it is not one that can safely be neglected by women who believe that political government will remain in the hands of men anyhow, and that it is better that the responsibility should go with the power.

Most women still prefer that it should so remain. Most women prefer, other things being equal, government by men to government by women. And that seems a sound preference, for though it might seem natural that women should side with women against men, and men with men against women, that is not so natural as it seems and usually does not happen. It is woman, not man, that is indispensable to man, and he is notoriously prone to take the side of a woman against a man; and it is man, not woman, that is indispensable to woman, and at a pinch she will usually cleave to her own as against her like.

The suffrage has come in some countries and in some of our own

States. Let it be tried in the experiment stations. We do not do well to be too much afraid of it. If it belongs to come we shall have it. If it belongs to stay it will stay. California is trying it. Let us see whether the woman voters will continue to like it and to use it, whether it helps matters, whether the feminine unrest is allayed or increased by it. Colorado has had it for nineteen years, and its value and the expediency of it seem to be as much discussed and disputed in that State as ever, and with just as much uncertainty of conclusion. It does not appear that "poverty, high prices, unemployment, child slavery, widespread misery and haggard want, prostitution, insanity, suicide and crime" are so much scarcer in Colo-

rado than in other States of like economic conditions as to furnish an example of the magical value of women's votes. Women's votes seem to be much like men's votes. When a row of pianos make a concert then the voters will make a millennium. At present it is not the pianos, but the players who play on them, who make the concert; and it is not the voters, but the poets, prophets and statesmen who inspire and enlist them, that secure millennial improvements in legislation and government. It does not seem to matter greatly who votes if only all the social groups are fairly represented. But a pianist can make no concert without his piano, and the political reformer must have some instrument on which to play and through which to express

himself and achieve his performances. Our reformers have such an instrument as it is, an instrument that not only responds to the player, but has, too, the property of the æolian harp, in that it catches what is in the air and is harmonious to it.

The feminine unrest stirs a certain proportion of the women to organize to get the vote, and to hope when they have got it to achieve great things. Other women, stirred by the same promptings, care nothing for the vote and will not organize to get it. But not a bit the less they reach out to satisfy the new needs of which they have become conscious, and to adjust themselves to the changes in their world and meet the new demands that life makes of them.

II

THE DISQUIET OF MISS THOMAS

II

THE DISQUIET OF MISS THOMAS

NOT all the nice women nor all the wise ones are on either side of the suffrage question. One sees ladies with a pathetic ineffectuality of the wits campaigning and even "soap-boxing" for the ballot, and conveying at every word and turn involuntary evidence of their own incapacity to do good with it. Other ladies, hearty supporters of the other side, disclose by their speech, their aspects, the very way they put one foot before the other, that the life they live and the world

they live it in are neither of them quite real, and that their view of things is a rear-platform view that we are all rapidly speeding away from. "Equal suffrage" is a big issue and important, but it is only a detail of the woman problem and the woman movement. Given, it may prove a biscuit thrown to a whale. Organized unrest, encouraged by the evidence that it can get what it tries for, may be expected to proceed to the next thing.

And so it is important to know what else besides suffrage is in the minds of the more important suffragists. The vote, of course, is only a tool by which women can express their political desires. Any notion that we can get of their ideals of a world improved by women for women

will be helpful in clearing the issues and giving individual judgment a chance to be exercised on the question whether or not such ideals are sound. President Thomas, of Bryn Mawr, is a notable woman and an ardent suffragist. Perhaps from her address at the anniversary of the founding of Mount Holyoke College, on "Woman's Part in the Future," we may get an idea of her notion of what would make the world more acceptable to women.

Miss Thomas says that women now have almost equal opportunities for study, but have not yet won the rewards of study; that they are "still shut out from the incentives to scholarship." Even in the lower public schools, she says, the most responsible and highly paid positions are still re-

served for men, and only in a few women's colleges may women compete with men for full professorships. Enlarging upon that she goes on to say that women scholars have another and still more cruel handicap. "They may have spent half a lifetime in fitting themselves for a scholar's work and then may be asked to choose between it and marriage. No one can estimate the number of women who remain unmarried in revolt before such a horrible alternative."

"How many men scholars," she asks, "would there be if we compelled them to make such an inhuman choice? As a result every civilized country contains a large and ever-increasing body of celibate women and men. The best women, and many of the best men, are unable to marry be-

cause of lack of means to found a family."

It is already clear, Miss Thomas believes, that this transformation of society, of which universal woman suffrage is only one small part, will give women equal opportunity in every field of human effort, including teaching and research. "Wherever women are already part of the electorate they receive equal pay for equal work, and are equally eligible with men for all State and municipal positions. Wherever women vote, which will soon be everywhere in the United States and in all European countries, women will be elected equally with men on all school and university boards. Education is women's pecular public interest. As an immediate consequence there

will be free competition for all State-supported university professorships. Nor will marriage any longer disqualify women from following their life work. Women will not deprive other women of a livelihood or of a dearly loved profession because they wish to marry. This has been done in the past only because men do not yet understand that women, like themselves, find their greatest happiness in congenial work."

In these words of Miss Thomas there is the suggestion that marriage is not in itself a sufficient career for able and educated women, and that it should not interfere with other work, especially of research and teaching, to which such women have been trained, any more than it does with the work of trained men.

If marriage is long enough delayed, there need be no considerable interference with the outside career of the wife. If there are to be no children, the woman may as well go along with the employments of her spinsterhood if she likes them, and if she and her husband are content with a marriage on those terms. But if there are children, the mother's outside work will be interrupted, not only for the intervals needed to let the children be born, but also because they are far more than a spare-hour occupation after they are born. Indian mothers strap their newborn papooses on their shoulders, and go on. Working women put their babies in a day nursery and go out to their work. Mothers who *must,* put the matches out of reach and leave their

young children at home with such care or substitutes for care as they can provide, and go out to earn wages. That is better than breaking up a family, but is it an ideal condition to be imitated by young mothers because they love their outside work?

Of course marriage is a greater impediment to a woman's outside career than it is to a man's! Votes for women cannot change that.

"At Bryn Mawr," says Miss Thomas, "we have never closed the engagement of a woman professor because of marriage"; and she adds: "Several years ago I persuaded a young woman scholar, whose husband was called to Bryn Mawr, to take up college teaching again. She told me afterward that it was like paradise on earth to shut herself into her study

in the college library among her books for long hours of intellectual effort."

If the young-woman scholar had no engrossing young domestic distractions and was bored, of course she did well to put her mind on something that gave it wholesome employment. Merely to keep a man amused and fed and his clothes mended is not in itself a sufficient career for an able woman. There are men who must be carried or they will fall down, and whether they are worth carrying or not they often appeal successfully to the motherliness of able women whose hearts are lonely and who shoulder them and trudge on. There are men of talent and a fine spirit geared to incapacity in practical affairs (like the painter in

Arnold Bennett's "Buried Alive") who are well worth mothering in this fashion, and there are analogous cases of hardworking and able self-supporting women who need the companionship of men and take husbands sometimes to get it, going on with their work of course. That is their right, and no one should grudge them the exercise of it, and whether husbands so acquired can support them or not is unimportant if only somehow the family bills are paid.

But these are all cases outside of common experience. Perhaps Miss Thomas's women scholars who "have spent half a lifetime in fitting themselves for a scholar's work" should also be classed as persons to whom common experience should not give rules. "Half a lifetime" is thirty-

five years. Surely women who wait as long as that to marry ought to be left to make for themselves the most satisfactory terms they can. No salvage of domestic happiness should be grudged them, and no obstacle put in the way of their readjustment. They should hold their professorships, if they need them, as long as they can do their work and then, if they have qualified for pensions, they should have them, married or not.

Nevertheless, not all women teachers or professors will regard as a "horrible alternative" a marriage acceptable in other respects, which diverts them from teaching and research and earning salaries. If a woman is willing to marry a man at all, she will usually be willing to live on his earnings, provided he can earn

enough, and sometimes even when he can't. The women teachers and professors are not all so in love with their work that married life without it looks "horrible" to them. Some of them are delighted at the prospect of being relieved from wage-earning and of having a home, a husband and a family. I have known of such cases. Miss Thomas does not disclose any knowledge of them. The fault, as I see it, that is to be found with her kind of unrest is that it overvalues independence for women, overvalues the wage-earning, untrammeled career, and undervalues the career that goes with marriage and domestic life.

It is to admire and respect Miss Thomas for what she has done and is doing. For the rather stupid peo-

ple who need to have it demonstrated that girls can learn whatever there is in books, she has provided one of the most effectual demonstrations. But might she not have done all that and run a nunnery with nuns for teachers? Is that what she would like? She seems to complain of marriage because it is slow to adjust itself to the processes of Bryn Mawr, but she is confident that when women vote the adjustment will be perfected. Can it be that Miss Thomas inclines to feel that life is for study rather than study for life? She seems to approve of marriage, but says it must not interfere with the careers of scholars.

When Miss Thomas says the best women are unable to marry she must mean the best in scholarship. Other-

wise it is a saying that must look for its defence, not to living people but to the might-have-been born that were not and never will be. It may be that these accomplished ladies will marry more generally when their salaries are larger and surer, but it takes strong faith to be hopeful of that. When wife and man both earn wages, of course the family income is increased. Marriage may seem practicable where both partners are wage-earners when it wouldn't be otherwise. But what would it mean when wife and man both went out to work and had to hold their positions? It would usually mean childlessness while it lasted. The ideal which seems to exist in the back part of Miss Thomas's mind of a coming marriage where the wife will earn her

own living and go her own gait does not seem to me to be sound. It may do, however, to temper that other, very old-fashioned idea that a woman belongs to her husband and shall do as he says. She does belong to him, certainly; but no more than he belongs to her. She should do as he says in some things; he should do as she says in others; both maintaining in many concerns entire freedom of individual action. People get along in the married state not so much by having separate incomes as by finding out what their business is and minding it. It is already appreciated by the intelligent that it is a part of the business of the head man in a family to secure to all the women in it the utmost freedom of action that is consistent with family life.

Women may get equal pay for equal work whether they vote or not, and notwithstanding that the pay of a grown man is adjusted to the expectation that he will share it with a woman; but one may doubt if any transformation of society ever will or ever can "give women equal opportunity in every field of human effort."

And yet it may if "opportunity" is not meant to imply capacity or inclination to embrace it. Even now opportunity is open enough to women in many fields that they do not enter because they are not attracted to them, or because in those fields men do better. They might be presidents of railroads and banks, and mistresses of counting rooms and great industrial enterprises. There is

no law to hinder it. A good many women, as it is, are active in direction in various lines of trade, but they are exceptional women. The more valuable women do not turn to these employments except under compulsion, and the only visible reason to think that they ever will is that the compulsion seems to be growing stronger, and, perhaps because men fail in their duties, more and more women seem to be pushed out of domestic life.

Do we want to cultivate that compulsion or, if possible, to lessen it?

Do we want women to shoulder an increased share of the hard manual labor of the world?

Mrs. Schreiner, apparently, would have them do so.

Do we want them to do an in-

creased share of the harder mental wage-earning work, like managing railroads, that is now done by men?

Miss Thomas apparently would have them do so. Is not that implied by "equal opportunity in every field of human effort"?

If women, with unimpaired power to do the things that women alone can do, could compete successfully with men in the rest of the employments, they would be far superior creatures to men.

Once, when "mental photograph" books were the fashion, there was a question in them: "What do you most admire in woman?" The answer to it that one man wrote was: "Milk." Maybe he was a doctor; maybe he was just a man of experience in raising a family. Taken lit-

erally it was an answer with which there will be sympathizers, but taken broadly it was full of philosophy and appreciation of our human problems Women are the fountain and the great feeders of life. They nourish mankind, body and spirit. They not only actually bear and rear the children, but they are also sustainers of men. And some of the childless women have been the greatest mothers of all.

There are close analogies between body and spirit; between bodily and mental or spiritual functions. There is not much milk in men. They are better for achievement, but not so good for sustenance.

III

THE AGITATION OF MRS. BELMONT

III

THE AGITATION OF MRS. BELMONT

MOST men are conscious, I suppose, of an impression that it is a sort of impertinence for a man to have opinions of his own on the question of whether or not women should vote. He is the judge in the matter and the jury. I suppose he may be employed without impropriety as advocate on either side; but he is neither plaintiff nor defendant. Here are the mothers of the land before him, part of them declaring that votes belong to women and that it is his duty to grant them,

part of them protesting that votes for women will be a mere embarrassment, and not of use enough either to women or to the country to offset the disturbance that will result from doubling the electorate. Poor man! It is a Solomon's decision that is required of him, to say which of these two lots of mothers love their country and humanity the most.

Complaint is made of those male persons who say that women will get the vote as soon as a majority of them want it.

The suffragists seem to feel that such persons are timorous—that is, they are afraid to have a definite opinion or take a pronounced stand either way. But is not their attitude fairly seemly for men sitting as a court to determine what are the rights

of a great question? Whether they incline one way or the other, and few men are without leaning in the matter, their minds should be fairly hospitable to argument and open to conviction.

It is a mistake to think by wholesale of the anti-suffrage men as persons who grudge to women their full share of whatever advantage these progressive times hold out. No doubt some of them are Bourbons who hold with the past at all odds, but the mass of them are just the natural allies of the anti-suffrage women. They are not men opposed to gratifying women their desires, but contestants that the majority of women shall have what they still seem to want: freedom to go about their business without having added to it any more

responsibility about general politics than they have already. The mental attitude of men toward women is not determined by their opinions about the expediency of the suffrage.

There is extraordinary confusion of argument over the whole woman question and especially the suffrage; a constant offering of reasons that are personal and particular for action that would be political and general, and a constant citation, as reasons for the suffrage, of facts and situations which the suffrage seems unlikely to affect; and, as reasons against the suffrage, of facts and situations which, seen from a different angle, argue for it. As an example in this latter class there is the old cry about the danger of the "bad woman" vote,

a cry which has pretty well passed out among the echoes. I mention it to make good Mrs. Belmont's assertion that "men in speaking of women voting always refer to the prostitute." The argument used to be that the prostitutes were allied with evil, and would always vote and always sell their votes to the wickedest buyer. But the truth is that the very existence of prostitution inclines some men toward woman suffrage because they want to see if women's votes could at all avail to clean prostitution up. And as for the poor "bad women" themselves, of course they would not be a political peril, for, by daylight at least, they are retiring persons. They are not the enemies of society, but its victims, and as the most pathetic sufferers by the present

order, as of every known order that has preceded it, they might well be allowed even now half a dozen votes apiece, so that their deplorable case might stand the better chance of getting effective attention.

And speaking of Mrs. Belmont, no doubt she has political gifts, but is she truly persuasive in exhortation? I don't find her so. Still there are two branches of the suffrage declamation. One aims to persuade men to give the suffrage to women, the other to excite women to want votes like anything, and to rise up and get them anyhow. Miss Addams is persuasive, but it seems to be the second branch of suffragist activity that engages Mrs. Belmont. When she speaks, prudent men go and get behind something and consider in

which direction they can get away best. So probably Mrs. Belmont speaks more with an eye to women than to men. I have been reading an address by her, but it does not persuade me to her views. When she says the Constitution should represent the will of all the people, not one-half, she forgets, no doubt, that our Constitution is acceptable enough to most of the women as well as to the men, so that it represents perhaps three-fourths or seven-eighths of the will of the people, which is really pretty good for a constitution. I never heard of one that represented the will of all the people, or even all the men. Usually constitutions are adopted with difficulty and against much opposition.

And when Mrs. Belmont says in

that same address that "a document that divides the people by the arbitrary line of sex is not in touch with modern growth," where is she? That was the way the Creator divided the people, and if He is not in touch with modern growth it behooves modern growth to connect with Him at its early convenience. Until it does it will not prosper.

And there, or thereabouts, is the real hitch in Mrs. Belmont's program. She thinks that when women get the vote they are going to be different. "As a whole," she says, "women will some day emerge from the mere physical sex facts that now hinder them." That was the Woodhull-Claflin idea, and one of the sisters wrote a book elaborately imputing a large share of the physical sex

facts of women to the meddlesomeness of men.

I guess not.

Women have been women a long time, and their physical sex facts are not an invention on which the patent seems about to expire.

Mrs. Belmont does not seem to see things quite as they are. "When the women vote," she says, "an entirely different body will deal with the executive and the judiciary. The blind struggle will be over; there will be light where there is now darkness. Order will be brought out of chaos."

Now is not that remarkable? The body that deals with the executive and the judiciary is only very slightly different when women vote. Look about! Look at the women and the men; all of the same substance, physi-

cal and mental, with difference of sex, to be sure, but of precisely the same human quality. It's like dipping soup out of a tureen; one ladleful: that's the men's votes; another ladleful: that's the women's votes. And the main result is more soup in the plate and not so much in the tureen. And the main contention against the suffrage is that one ladleful of soup is enough, and the main contention for it is that it seems fairer to have two, now that the country has such a large appetite.

The executive and the judiciary have only a little to do with blind struggle. They are not so bad now in this country as to be a determining cause of chaos. At their best they can no more than contribute a little to bring order out of it, and there

is no considerable probability that women's votes would expedite the improvement of either of them. They might, in some places, in some details. If Miss Addams had all the working women of voting age (about half the total number) in Chicago organized and ready to vote as she advised, I suppose they would be a power in Chicago and Illinois politics, and while she exercised that power it might do good. But how long she could hold the power, and into what hands it would fall when it divided, as it surely would; and to what ends, wise or detrimental, it would be used, who can say? Happily the advancement of women and the improvement of the conditions of life are not tied up to woman suffrage, and will go on as long as civilization goes forward,

whether women vote or not. Of course there is no more guarantee that women will vote wisely than that men will, and, what is more, there is no more certainty, not a bit, that they will vote to improve the condition of women than that men will do so. Men usually do vote for anything that the best of the advanced women want. They are deliberate about it, but they ought to be. If women voted laws with much less deliberation than men do, there would be more snarls in the statute books for the courts to disentangle.

If the suffrage wins in New York, and Mrs. Belmont organizes a "hall" and goes into city politics, she will have a lot of fun, of course, and it will be a fine field for her abilities. But her dream of bringing order out

of chaos by the women's vote would be subject to disturbance by the certainty that for every woman she could enlist for her policies two or three would get up early to take the other side. What's the gain of having woman "stand free," as Mrs. Belmont says, "her chains and shackles loosened, fallen at her feet," if after all she troops off and votes with Mrs. Dodge? And that, to a considerable and perhaps preponderant extent, is what she would do. It would be some fun, though. Politics don't make invariably for righteousness, but they make considerably for entertainment, and the argument that women are entitled to their share of that, is better than most of the suffragists' arguments.

In the suffrage parade in New

York after election there was a transparency that said that one hundred and forty-six girls—if that was the number—were killed in the Triangle Shirt Waist fire, and that nothing effectual was done about it. And it asked if that would have been true if the killed had been voters?

In so far as it was true at all, of course it would. A woman killed makes a greater impression on our public mind than a man killed. A lost or stolen child stirs up more feeling than either, yet a child has no vote.

In the same amusing line is Mrs. Belmont's suggestion that though oil has risen in price since the Oil Trust was dissolved, cigarettes and tobacco have not gone up since the Tobacco Trust was dissolved, because the con-

sumers of cigarettes and tobacco are voters.

It was the famous three tailors of Tooley Street who began their proclamation: "We, the people of England." Some of the suffrage ladies, Mrs. Belmont among them, remind one of those tailors when they speak for all the women of the United States. Nevertheless their voices are not raised in vain, for these are revolutionary times, in which adjustment to new conditions of life presses hard, and a voice is a voice even though its arguments are vulnerable.

The other morning, in the lobby of a Fifth Avenue hotel, two men and a woman were sitting on a lounge facing the office counter. One of the men was smoking, the woman

was sewing something and they were all talking together. You couldn't say more for the men than that they were decent looking. The woman seemed a lady. Her gown was violet silk, very nice but entirely simple, not a gown she was exhibiting, but a frock in which she seemed comfortable and looked well. She had a lot of rings on her hands, and a clean, fresh face, but she was not a particularly pretty woman. Yet to see her there with her hat off, sewing in the hotel lobby and talking to her men, was a very pleasing sight. You noticed it because it was a little out of common. Here, you thought, was a woman who had a standard of living in her own head, and lived it as she went along; who neither neglected nor overemphasized appearance, who

kept her fingers busy and her mind tranquil, and who was a companion to her men. She domesticated the whole lobby, so that you wanted to sit down and rest in it. You thought better of the hotel because she was sitting there, and better of the two men because they had sense enough to like her company, and had had sense enough back in their lives to make her like theirs. And because she seemed to feel at home anywhere in that hotel, and didn't seem constrained to run off to her bedroom to take a stitch, you set her down somehow as a free woman.

It is delightful to see women free in that way, and at ease in their world, and companionable with their men. That's the way it is going to be, the suffragists think, after women

get the vote. The vote may help; I don't know. But that's the way it is now with the women who have found themselves and their world. They are not waiting for a vote. They are going ahead and living under the laws of the kingdom within them. One sees them about everywhere, in good clothes, in bad clothes, clean and not so clean, rich, well-to-do, poor, and sometimes very poor.

There is peace in their faces. Back in their minds somewhere is something in which they find mental rest, and by aid of which their tasks, however complicated, however heavy, are not too heavy for their strength. In a car of the Elevated I saw just such a wonderful woman, sitting bareheaded, in poor clothes, between two roughly dressed workingmen, talk-

ing earnestly with both, grave, tranquil, sweet, and with true Madonna-like breadth of brow and simple sweep of dark hair. It rested one to watch her.

I look and look and look at the women in the street. There are just two kinds: those who have found themselves and their world, and those who haven't. These last are abundantly represented among the suffragists; a masterless lot they are, out of a job and practicing to produce a masterless world. But the master they need is not a man, for some of them have men already, but an inner governor, who shall look out of their eyes and see truth and duty, and strengthen their hands to seize them.

IV

THE ADMIRABLE MISS ADDAMS

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THE ADMIRABLE MISS ADDAMS

PEOPLE hold views, not so much because of the facts in sight, as because of the faith or lack of it that is in them. The papers quoted Dr. Forbes Winslow as saying, in the Eugenics Congress in London last summer, that there would be more lunatics than sane people in the world three hundred years from now. Probably he said it with qualifications that were lost out in transit, or else his definition of lunacy is more comprehensive than ours. Dr. Lombroso, learning that

madness increases in this country three times as fast as population, left behind an opinion (so the newspaper says) that in a hundred years or so we would all have passed beyond the help of mere alcohol, and be taking ether or morphia.

But these learned men took somber views. *We* don't feel so about it. *We* have faith to think that, long before we all take to morphine or before half of us have gone crazy, we shall get the machinery of life running better, so that the strain will be less.

Neither the suffragists nor the antis are at all favorable to the sort of progress that Dr. Forbes Winslow (as quoted) and Dr. Lombroso have anticipated. The suffragists feel that when women get the vote the world's

machinery will run smoother, and the women opposed feel that when women have to vote the whirl will be worse than ever and the current toward the mad-house stronger. But neither of them want the strain of living increased.

I don't see that either of these views is closely related to facts. A suffragette has been defined by an observer, lacking, possibly, in sympathy, as a woman who wants something and thinks it's the vote. That seems a fairly sound definition, for it is manifest to observers that behind the general suffragist desire for the vote there are vastly different attitudes of mind. There are women who want the vote as a suitable personal attribute, as they might covet a pearl necklace, or house, or a frock,

or something that they would look well in, or that would add to their personal luster or distinction. There are others who want it as an instrument of power. They want something either for themselves, or for society, which, they think, women's votes will help them to get. There is Miss Addams. She never seems to be reaching out for the vote for any use of personal embellishment, or to add to distinction or importance, which in her case would be hard. She seems to want it, incidentally, for women, because of other things which she wants for them and all mankind, and which, she thinks, would come sooner if women had the suffrage. These things that she wants belong to honest government by capable officers, and include such things as

clean milk, limited hours of work especially for women, restriction of child labor, protection from unguarded machinery and industrial diseases, old age insurance, the diversion of the pay of convicts from the pockets of contractors to the support of the convicts' dependent families, and the extirpation, if possible, of prostitution. Miss Addams, when she talks of these matters, talks of them in a fashion, and with a breadth of view and precision of instance, that make you feel that whatever Miss Addams is is right, and when she looms up as a suffragist, that, too, becomes right, by inclusion. Since Mrs. Howe died, Miss Addams has become the strongest argument the suffragists have.

Why?

Because her self-effacing personality, and the manner of her life, and her spirit and her achievements attach people to her, and to her opinions.

But so far as I know, which is very likely not far enough, the chief basis of her sentiment as a suffragist is that when women vote it will be easier to induce the Illinois legislature to pass suitable statutes, and the courts to confirm, and the administration to enforce, them, and easier to induce Congress to piece them out where necessary with Federal legislation, and easier generally to compel indecent people to behave decently.

Time was when if a person became conscious of sin, he repented. Now he tries to get a bill through the legis-

lature. The old way had good points, but it is the fashion to abandon all the old retail ways and go in for wholesale methods. That fashion is not all good. Misconduct is bad, but legislation is an awful thing. But you don't think so when Miss Addams talks about the need of enforcing proper statutes in Chicago. Beveridge's Federal child-labor law provided for denial of transshipment from State to State of commodities produced in factories in which child labor was not properly limited and guarded. Miss Addams seems to have approved that bill (which to me seems scandalous), as did most of the social workers. State rights and the fabric of government seem to be nothing to her, and even parental and family rights seem to be very little,

so much she has seen them abused; so much the duties that should go with them neglected. Her politics is clean milk, the protection of the young, conditions of life that are not incompatible with honest and wholesome living. But when it comes to connecting these things with women's votes, where is she? The relation between them is entirely speculative. "In women as voters," says Miss Addams's fellow-townsman, Mr. Floyd Dell, "we shall have an element impatient of restraint, straining at the rules of procedure, cynical of excuses for inaction; not always, by any means, on the side of progress; making every mistake possible to ignorance and self-conceit." And yet he wants them to vote, for he goes on: "but transforming our politics

from a vicious end to an efficient means—from a cancer into an organ."

Why does he think that? If Miss Addams is a true representative of womankind, one may think of women's votes transforming our politics from a vicious end to an efficient means, but so you could think of men's votes doing if Robert de Forest or Jacob Riis were representative men. Mr. Dell finds Mrs. Pankhurst much more representative of womankind than Miss Addams. Mrs. Pankhurst, he says, "has enabled us to see what women really are like, just as Miss Addams has, by her magnificent anomalies, shown us what women are not like."

But I guess Mr. Dell generalizes too much. Mrs. Pankhurst looks

quite as unusual as Miss Addams. Neither of them is representative, but there is in Miss Addams a spirit that is more than hers; that was not born with her, nor will die with her, that knows neither sex nor race, nor depends on votes or laws, but works imperishably and with great rewards for the healing of the nations. Women's votes may help Miss Addams's causes or they may not. Her opinion of their usefulness seems to be a matter of pure faith. But somehow the causes have got to win, and if women don't make them win, the men will have to.

To be sure it is nothing against an opinion that it rests on faith more than on computable facts. I suppose that most of the great opinions that move the world have faith for their

basis. Faith seems to be a higher intelligence than reason—"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen." Certainly it is an ill-furnished soul that would not swap his computable expectations for his hopes. Anybody that has this mysterious confidence in the efficacy of women's votes ought to want them as Miss Addams does, and strive, and do battle, and soapbox for them as so many other ladies do.

For my part—and I speak humbly as a man should, professing no more than inability to see that women's votes will be any better than men's—I should be in a more glorious state of expectation of benefits to follow the triumph of the suffrage if domestic service was in a some-

what more popular case. Mrs. Atherton is a suffragist, but less excited about it than some ladies. She sees a need of it in England, but as to these States she speaks in a newspaper of the servant question as far more important than the question whether a woman should vote or not. To be sure the servant question is important, and it is a matter almost entirely controlled by women. It is a great domestic industry that machinery has not much affected, that increases in its demands with the wealth of the country, and that is better spread out over the country than any other paid occupation that engages women. It enormously affects the comfort and happiness of life, it is pretty well paid, it calls for skill, judgment, brains and training,

and personality counts in it very much indeed. You hire nimble fingers and a capacity for consistent spelling to run your typewriter, and nimble fingers and some other limited capacity to tend a loom, but to live in your house and cook or wash or sweep and make beds, you hire a whole woman. There is money enough spent on domestic service to make it an attractive calling. If it *were* an attractive calling, it would relieve very much more than it does now the pressure that drives girls to the shops and factories in numbers that cheapen their labor. But it is not sufficiently attractive. Girls don't like it because its industrial standing is not good; because it restricts their freedom too much, is too indefinite in its demands, and, I fear,

because they don't like to work for women.

It is to laugh at that, but isn't it true? I am told that domestic service has not yet wholly severed its connection with feudalism. I suppose the average woman employer of servants is strong on control and somewhat weak on liberty, is inclined to think of servants as persons of "that class," and suffers from some involuntary inability to deal with them on the basis of a common humanity. To be sure it is a considerable achievement to deal with all people on that basis; to perceive that the offices of life have their various conventions and conditions of service, but that all the people who fill them are the children of the King. But, as it is, domestic service is under the

control of women, and if they had been able to make it more attractive I should have livelier hopes of what women's votes may achieve for the conditions of life outside of the house.

Miss Addams, of course, understands all that. She has complained that the lives of too many domestic servants are dull rounds of drudgery, she has said that domestic service is the occupation that furnishes more prostitutes than any other, and she has quoted Tolstoi's words: "We constantly think that there are circumstances in which a human being can be treated without affection, and there are no such circumstances."

Two lots of men seem to me to be a little beside the mark in the aim of their energies; those who rush to

trade in their birth-right as voters for the approval of the suffrage seeking women, and those who exhibit tremors of apprehension at the thought that the world is going to be feminized. There are some men who have woman-suffrage in the blood; want it; always did; believe in it, advocate it. There are others who think they see it coming and aspire to be on the reception committee when it arrives. The good suffragists are welcome to all the members of this latter group. There is nothing men value more than women's favor, probably nothing they value so much, but their attainment of it is quite apt to be inversely to their direct efforts. What the best women like best in men is manhood. It is not always to be had, and then, of course, they have to

make the best of what semblance of it is obtainable.

And as for the men who fear feminism, they show a curious distrust of the powers that are male. The only sound claim the male creature has to be boss of the universe is based on divine right. If the Creator intended that he should be boss and equipped him with the facilities proper to that office, boss he will be and nothing can stop him. Votes of women will have no more effect on his mastership than so many boiled peas. He may be gentle, he may be patient, he may study to serve, he may shape himself to controlled submission, but if natural mastership is in him, master he will be. If it was not Nature's gift to him, and is not a necessary incident of progressive

human life, then the sooner he finds his place the better. Anyhow, he can do very little about it either way except to be himself, and the best man he can. Petty tyrannies over women, dogmatic denial to women of anything on earth or in life that they want and can attain and handle, will avail not a jot to keep man in power. Women are very enduring creatures who grow strong, and have distinctly grown to their present robust expansion, on petty tyrannies and silly proscriptions. For centuries in China they bound the women's feet to keep women in their place. And what did it finally come to? To Tsi-Ann, the woman autocrat! What the insurgent women nowadays are after seems to be not so much power—for they have a vast deal of that already

—as advertisement. That is a commodity that is not very filling at the price, and is very apt to prove incompatible with power itself. When a car wheel thrashes they take it off, when a machine goes noisily it goes to the shop; advertisement is noise; it makes for jealousy, competition, hostility and retirement. The ladies are welcome to it if they like it, but it will not increase their power.

Individual incidents may have a feminist cast, and scare the timid. The equalization of the salaries of men and women in the public schools of New York has had the immediate effect of a waiting list of teachers with no names of men on it. That is bad. There are no men teachers waiting at the bottom of the line. But the schools must have a proper

proportion of men teachers and somehow, presently, will get them. But another effect the raising of the women's salaries has had is amusing and instructive. I hear that the enriched women-teachers have been getting married by shoals. I guess there is nothing that women can get but what men will promptly share. A woman's natural use of what she has seems to be to confer it on a man, and certainly a man's natural use of what he can get is to confer it on a woman.

So let us try to be easy in our minds and await whatever is coming to women and men with fortitude and due philosophy. "No one tries to grind us down," Mr. Wilson says, "but we are all caught in a great economic system which is heartless." And behind that economic system is

Nature, forever seeking her ends and vindicating her laws, and fairly ruthless in her proceedings. Perhaps we shall be able to inculcate benevolence into our economic system, but Nature owns the road and will walk down the middle of it till the crash of doom, and run over anything that gets in the way without so much as saying "Honk, honk!"

V

SELF-SUPPORTING WIVES

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SELF-SUPPORTING WIVES

IT is quite a help, in discussing things like the unrest of women, to get hold of a fact. A fact comes out of the mist of theory like one of those red buoys a steamer picks up as it feels its way into port on a foggy morning. The biggest fact about the modern woman discussion is the sight of women in all the shops and offices. That is a constant reminder that there are deep economic reasons behind and below all the current disturbance. Seeing all the army of office-keeping women

doing what so lately was men's work, how can we wonder at anything anybody thinks about the imminence of an entire change in the relation of women to life? To the office men the office women are hands, eyes, ears and speech, and of course brains, too, in a measure. Any observer has a good *prima-facie* case in arguing that this enormous supersession of men clerks by women marks the progress of a movement to the control of all business by women. It does mean some increase of control, no doubt, but nowhere are the words of Saint Paul, so much reprobated, about the woman being created for the man, better justified than in the shops and offices.

But it is a fact that the shops and offices nowadays are full of

women working for wages. Those I see seem happy in their employment, and their example is not lost on those who stay at home. But there have always been uses for unmarried women who would go out to work. The schools have long been full of spinster teachers, honored in their vocation, and the dwelling-houses have been full of unmarried woman servants. We have been used to seeing these women when they married give up their outside vocations. But here we run up against more facts. One of them is the increased cost of living. Another is that the women who have gone into the shops and offices have competed in the labor market with the clerks, secretaries and salesmen, and the wages of the male workers of that

sort have either fallen off or have failed to increase in proportion to the increased cost of living.

Ellen Key thinks that men grow less and less able to support women, and so far as concerns the general run of office-working men at least, that may be true. But a woman who is a wage-earner, and is sure of her position, will marry if her own wages, or hers and the man's combined, are enough to provide a satisfactory support. That is the case of the school-teachers in New York, who may hold their places whether they marry or not.

And there comes along another fact, in the application, much discussed in the newspapers at this writing, of a Brooklyn school-teacher to the Board of Education for a year's

leave, without pay, to give time for her expected baby to be born and started in life. The application was refused on the ground that the Board did not have authority to grant it. It has been usual to grant leaves of several months to married teachers in similar cases where the reason of the application was not stated, and the Board's by-laws permit the absence of a teacher for a year when the object of the vacation is study. But no by-law names maternity as an acceptable reason for a year's absence, and the refusal of the Board was promptly followed by the circulation of a petition for a change in the by-laws.

That petition is interesting because it aims to put upon the city, as employer, a measure of responsibility

for the incidents of marriage in a married woman whom it employs. The general understanding about marriage has been that the husband should support his wife, and that unless he could, or the woman had private means, she should not marry him. This petition aims to give the approval of a very important Board to the proposition that a woman is justified in getting married on the income she herself earns, and to provide which she must continue to be a wage-earner.

Miss Thomas, of Bryn Mawr, in her Mount Holyoke address seemed to approve that proposition, and protested earnestly against the idea that a woman teacher must abandon her profession merely because she gets married. I notice that Ellen Key

does not see eye to eye with Miss Thomas in this matter. In her latest book she does not shrink from criticizing some effects of the influence of the woman movement on marriage. And while she knows that women, married or single, must be supported, and must support themselves if no one else supports them, she is not pleased to see married women undertake obligations that should rightly fall on their husbands. "No woman," she says, "has ever been at the same time all that a wife can be to her husband, a mother to her children, a housewife to her house, a working-woman to her work."

Of course that is true. A great many women have been compelled to try to do all these things, and some of them have made wonderful per-

formances, but to recognize that necessity often compels and misfortune constrains is one thing, and to accept as suitable, and approve, a plan of life that includes continuous, outside wage-earning for a married woman is another.

Of some marriages Ellen Key speaks, where man and wife both work at suitable employments, and where the domestic life is happy and the work progresses easily as long as there are no children. But "when children arrive then there begins for the wife, even in such marriages, a life beyond her strength." To save the mother's strength, and keep it for the work that needs it most, Ellen Key would have "society recompense the vocation of mother." That is a solution provided society can afford

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it, but the proposal to have society take care of its able-bodied and responsible people—and others should hardly be encouraged to have children—must always have something of the flavor of a proposal that we shall lift ourselves up by the bootstraps. If society must have children and they cannot be had except by recompensing the mothers, no doubt the mothers will be recompensed; but, as it is, society hereabouts schools the children and has assumed so large a number of other duties that used to be parental, that it will hesitate long to undertake this new expense.

I am told that this plan of recompensing mothers was followed in the days of the Roman Empire, and for the reason that more children were needed. The natural inquiry is:

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"Did it come when the Roman civilization was in its decline?" And the answer I got was "Yes." It seems a sort of provision that would be tried when natural sentiments and standards were failing, when, either because society had outrun its economic machinery or because of degeneracy of morals, men had lost their pride of birth and scrambled to get the satisfactions of life from any hand at any cost. There may be conditions of society when opportunity has been monopolized, and law and government have failed to protect life, when ordinary men, without fault of their own, may become very helpless as wage-earners, and the market for labor may be more favorable to women. There is no novelty in a local condition where a woman

can get work and a man cannot; no novelty in women supporting men who cannot get work or cannot do it; no novelty in women supporting men who do not wish to work or who are drunken or impractical; no novelty even in the farming out of women for infamous uses by infamous men who live on their tragic earnings.

For this last grade of men, of whom we have lately heard so much, of course every decent person favors root-and-branch methods, the law, the lash, the stock—anything that will reach them and wipe their activities out of an earth that they defile. But it is mighty hard to do it, chiefly because their women are usually loth to destroy the only men they have.

That is true, also, of better and more fortunate and abler women. They are terribly tolerant and long suffering with men; will usually stick to them when they seem not worth sticking to, and support them if they can when they seem not worth supporting. Men seem to be extremely necessary to their happiness, and they do not readily give them up altogether; and besides a great many of them are very subject to the sense of duty.

That is something that Nature has arranged, and we had better respect it, and not dispute that it is a valuable arrangement. But we need not go so far as to help in riveting by law, or even by by-law, on the society of which we are a part, provisions looking to the support of

husbands by married women. That will be done too much in ordinary course without formal provision for it.

Some of the suffragists, or the feminists—for suffrage hasn't much to do with it—have a vision of man and wife starting out with dinner-pails in the morning, either together or separately, and doing a wage-earning day's work, and coming home at night, and raising the necessary number of children, and being happy, prosperous and contented in that liberated and independent condition. That vision is nine-tenths delusion. It will work at an extreme pinch where the alternative is no bread, and it will work more or less in the case of childless people. But for the general run of families and people the

old apportionment is right; one to earn wages and one to keep the home. That apportionment still governs, I suppose, in an enormous proportion of existing families, for those girls in the shops and offices are not yet all the women there are. And where women continue to earn daily wages after marriage the apportionment will tend still to continue. Somebody must keep the home. The wife has been used to do it for the laboring husband. But where the wife goes out to work for the family support she needs to have it done for her. She needs some one to think for her, to sustain her, to amuse and soothe and rest her. She needs a wife, and since she cannot conveniently take a wife she will be apt to treat herself to a husband to be a wife to her.

There is no great scarcity of women nowadays who are hard driven by professional or business cares and labors. They all need wives; all need to be supplemented by some one who has time and strength to think about the things they cannot spare thought for. If they get husbands who do for them what women commonly do for men—orderly, dutiful husbands—they are lucky, and nobody should grudge them the companionship they gain, and no one should scoff at the successful husbands of working-women. It is a hard job to be that. It calls for those saintlike qualities which—so much to the displeasure of some feminists—are thought to be characteristic of women. The husband of the wage-earner must learn to sink himself in

her, to be a helper, an accessory, a nurse, a buffer, a keeper of accounts and speaker at the telephone. He must know every nerve she has and respect it. He must know how she should be fed, and see that she is so fed. It can be done; it has been done; it is no more than millions of women do or have done for men. Honor a man who can do it for a woman!

But there are few such men. Some of them there have been, fine creatures; but there are few, though men often have got wonderful discipline from their wives; have been wonderfully perfected in patience, long suffering, gentleness, the withholding of inopportune speech and all the embellishments recommended by Saint Paul for the adornment and perfection of character.

And of course the boot is often on the other foot, about as often, I suppose. In all the apportionment of good and bad in character, men and women, taken by and large, show about alike. Women are much better in some particulars of virtue, men in others, but they are both the same stuff, precisely the same, and have no general differences of ethical quality. Sex—the body—is only the garment of personality, a garment strangely clinging and constraining, but beneath it is the soul, the same soul for man or woman.

A man may make of himself a fair substitute for a wife for a working-woman, but it takes a rarer talent still for him to make a competent mother for her children. That calls for instincts he does not have. It is aston-

ishing how lacking many of the suffragist writers are in appreciation of what is done for a family by a competent mother. They might have been born from a penny-in-the-slot machine for all the conception they show of the job of mothering, and of the time, the thought, the strength, the leisure and the wit it takes to do it. You would think to read them that a mother's cares did not extend beyond infancy, and that a fairly active nurse girl, with the help of an apothecary's clerk, could easily relieve her of all of them. But some of the suffragist writers know better —Ellen Key, for one, who really has a serious-minded, grown-up-woman's knowledge about the woman's end of human life, and comes out of her remarkable divagations after free

love and trial marriage, and Heaven knows what, into admirable discourse about the domestic side of life, and the enormous importance of giving married women a chance to keep their minds on it.

Altogether too many of the active suffragists present as their credentials for the work of rearranging human life the glaring evidences of their failure to live it successfully as it is. Women who seem to have made a mess of all life's relations are not abashed to offer themselves as pilots to their sex. It is nothing that they do not inspire much confidence in the minds of their more conservative and successful sisters. It is everything if they make an enormous noise, and that they do, and it is a serious factor in disturbance.

VI

FEMINISM AND THE DUAL STANDARD

VI

FEMINISM AND THE DUAL STANDARD

WHAT is a feminist? My twelve-year-old dictionary does not tell. "Feminism: the qualities of females" is the nearest it comes, and that is no help. It is something that has lately broken loose, and we must consult the latest authorities. I find in the February (1913) number of *McClure's Magazine* that "the significant and deep-rooted movement to readjust the social position of women, in its largest general aspects, is termed feminism; in its immediate

political aspects, suffrage." *McClure's* indorses Miss Inez Milholland as a qualified and competent feminist, and Miss Milholland expounds the faith that is in her in a piece in that magazine. So perhaps if we look into the piece we shall get a notion of what the feminists have got on their minds.

Miss Milholland discusses "the liberation of a sex." Women, for the first time in history, she says, are to have something approaching an equal voice in the administration of human affairs. "They are to sit on juries, to administer public offices, to confer in the high councils of the nation," and "bring directly to the problems of government and of civilization those qualities, in certain respects different from man's, which they have

hitherto been permitted to employ only indirectly, in the private influence of the individual woman on the man who has acted for himself and her in the world of government and affairs."

Please do not smile: this is a serious matter. There are a good many women and they have various minds and opinions, and it is probable that Miss Milholland does not represent all of them. But some of them probably she does represent more or less, and it may be instructive to search out what details of liberation she and they consider desirable.

Forecasting the results which may be expected to attend "this sudden liberation of an entire sex" from "the conditions of bondage and restraint," Miss Milholland finds that "the insti-

tutions most certain to be touched and changed are the institutions in which the sex, as a sex, is most peculiarly and vitally interested — the home and marriage itself." She does not say explicitly in this first article how they are to be changed, but she gives notice that "the old reticences are destroyed forever," and she wants us to study what women are printing and saying "in the light of the underlying body of modern thought from which they are clearly drawing their ideas and their inspiration." So doing, she says, we shall arrive at certain rather obvious conclusions, including, it seems, "an assault on the dual standard of morality, and an assertion of sex rights on the part of woman." To illustrate, she quotes from a current play in which a girl

"has slipped away for a week-end with the son of her father's employer." The fact is discovered. The boy is persuaded to marry her "to save her honor." She refuses. She does not love him. "But you did love me," he insists. "You must have loved me." She turns and asks, "Did you love me?" "No," he replies, "but I'm a man. It was just my fancy of the moment." "Well," is her answer, "I am a woman. It was just my fancy of the moment."

All right, Miss Milholland, all right. One is no better than the other, and that is recognized in the proposal that they marry. They don't! Very well. But if there is a baby, what becomes of the baby, and what becomes of the girl? The dual standard, which cannot be admired

ethically, is based on the very practical consideration that it is the girl, not the man, who has the baby. It has come to be, not for the indulgence of men, but for the protection of girls. The great practical inconvenience of having babies in the world without fathers, and mothers without husbands, has led to the dual standard and to an extreme reprehension of the indiscretions of women. That reprehension is a good deal mollified in these times, not as a consequence of the "liberation of a sex," but because sentiment in these matters has grown kinder and more just. You may well enough argue that the girl in "Hindle Wakes" did better not to marry the boy if she did not want him, especially if there was no baby. But you cannot argue for a

liberation of sex that eliminates the dual standard by bringing the chastity of women down to the level of the chastity of men. That seems to be what you argue for and predict, and that won't wash. It implies conditions that would add to the burdens already incurred in behalf of "unfortunate" women, additional cares for the rescue of "unfortunate" men. Chastity in bachelors and chastity in spinsters have different values, a difference based on the fact that when there is a baby it is the woman that must bear it. You may argue that the chastity of men must be prodded up to the level of the chastity of women, and in that you will have the support of the moralists, though the urgency of passion is thought to be far less in normal wom-

en than in normal men. But you will get no support anywhere for social recognition of the kind of "sex rights" that you seem to demand for liberated women. If that is feminism, "in its immediate political aspects, suffrage," verily the fat is in the fire.

And do you mark, Miss Milholland, that the dual standard is almost entirely a matter of social sentiment! The law, or the police power, to be sure, is harder on prostitutes than on their patrons, but that accords with a theory that prostitutes, like gambling house keepers, are promoters of disorder. Except for women rated as "disorderly," there is no law concerning chastity that does not equally apply to men, and for married people the written law is the same for

man and wife, and public sentiment sustains it.

And who are the upholders and motioners of the dual standard? Women chiefly, Miss Milholland. It is strongly, vehemently, the feeling of mothers that the exercise of what you call "sex rights" is not a privilege to be desired for daughters, and they discourage it, especially in women, wherever it appears. I don't see how the "readjustment of the social position of women" is going to change the feelings of mothers on this point, or that it will make a difference if women "sit on juries, administer public offices and confer in the high councils of the nation." The exercise of "sex rights," except the right to get married, does not seem likely to receive either political or social support,

but rather to remain, as now, distinctly an individual adventure, as to which the destruction of the old reticences will be earnestly deprecated by the adventurer. The combination of the miscellaneous exercise of "sex rights" with advertisement is something that very few civilized women have been able to get away with. Some remarkable women have done it—Cleopatra, Catherine of Russia, George Sand, and others—but their success, though interesting, is hardly attractive, and the failures that offset it are to be reckoned in millions.

VII

THE CAUSE AND THE CURE

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THE CAUSE AND THE CURE

AFTER all, disturbance is a fine thing. First or last, pretty much all the considerable good we see about has come along of it. Flies ever the spume from the great waves that great winds have raised. The ocean without occasional gales would be dull and probably unwholesome, and human life without occasional disturbances would get nowhere. The current unrest of women is a big disturbance, but every storm blows out in time, and so will this one.

But how will it end and where will it leave us?

In thinking about that, one asks what has caused it. It seems credible enough that it is part of a general disturbance that is epidemic all over the world; a disturbance caused by the uneasiness of great masses of people who find themselves cramped by the limitations, or overstrained by the demands, of the existing apparatus for the regulation of human life, or in whom the aspirations of an intelligence quickened by popular education demand opportunities and satisfactions that they see but cannot share. In art, in medicine, in business, in politics, there is the same insurgent disposition, shared by thousands, to smash the existing machine which denies them expression and

make a new one that will do better. Humanity seems to have outgrown its old collar and to insist on having one of the next larger size. Every considerable historical event in the last fifteen years is a part of that movement. The lesson of "room, brothers, room in the world" was taught to Russia by Japan, was taught by the United States to Spain, was taught by Boers to British and by British to Boers, is proceeding in China, is proceeding strenuously in England, is being taught to all Europe by the Balkan allies, is going forward obscurely and dolorously in Mexico, was lately exhibited somewhat humorously in the Futurist picture-show in New York, is demonstrated in medicine by the Osteopaths and Christian Scientists, and

in law by movements for recall of judges or their decisions, and in the Roman Catholic church by modernists, and separation of church from state in Italy, France and Spain. And of all this general ruction the woman movement is a part. It may be right or wrong in directing so much energy toward the attainment of woman suffrage, the arguments of its individual apostles may be often bad and their specific aims mistaken, but there is no use of disparaging the power of the movement, or of denying that it has great underlying causes, or of doubting that it will have an effect on human life.

I suppose the underlying causes of it are chiefly economic. The restless women would not get so much leadership unless considerable masses

of women were disturbed, and the considerable masses would not be disturbed nor follow restless, and often mistaken, leaders if they were comfortable. Everybody nowadays nibbles at education; everybody reads and either has ideas or goes through motions of having them, and consequently everybody—pretty much—has more than formerly to express, and feels more need of expressing it. Now the natural way for women to express themselves seems to be by means of husbands and children, but somehow a proportion of the women, already large and constantly increasing, seem to find that mode of expression either impossible, or so difficult, or so unsatisfactory, that they turn to anything else they can. A large proportion of the women

nowadays do not seem to look upon marriage as their natural destiny. They plan for it, but merely as a possibility, considerably speculative, and with alternatives that look surer at least, and are more definitely attainable by their own efforts. The alternatives—the office jobs and factory and shop employments, and nearly all the independent vocations—are all right enough except for one thing, that the women who take to them permanently might almost as well not be women at all, because they cannot conveniently combine with the service these occupations exact the great and indispensable service of continuing the species. It was for that indispensable service that women were contrived, and not for office work, nor factory work, nor

work in shops. To the indispensable service the great mass of women undoubtedly are true, preferring it and undertaking it when it is reasonably attainable.

Then what's the matter?

Machinery for one thing, which, as we are so much told, has upset the old domestic industries, disturbed the conditions of life and multiplied the employments that are alternatives to marriage. For another thing, and partly as a result of machinery, an overwhelming and compelling industrialism, engrossed in material progress, and ruthlessly beset to turn the most precious assets of humanity and civilization into material wealth for immediate use. The same industrialism that deforests the land, skins the soil, devours and wastes the coal-beds

and the iron mines, and squeezes the last drop of mineral oil out of the bowels of Earth, seems ready, without any further compunction than a column of figures may signify, to divert the brains and hearts and fingers and bodies of women from the service indispensable to life to these temporary, sterile, and incomparably less important uses of commercialism. Somehow, in a world never so rich as now, the men seem less able than they used to be to take care of the women. Everything tends to be commercialized, all the commercialization tends to monopoly, and monopoly makes a machine and the human race must tend it or starve.

That is one thing that machinery has done for us. It is nobody's fault in particular. It has just come to

be because conditions produced it, and because wealth is good, and because if you invent and make and run machines and organizations at all, you've got to do it at a profit. The machinery of contemporary life is wonderful, admirable, marvelously convenient and productive. The trouble is that the human race seem to be caught in the cogs of it, and to be in danger of being ground up.

So the women cry out. Something is the matter and they feel it. Driven partly out of their own kingdom in man's, they demand equal rights, privileges, emoluments, in the man's kingdom. That is the old cure by a hair of the dog. It is not much of a cure. The better way is to make the woman's own kingdom habitable again, and to get all the modern im-

provements into it, and win her back to live in it and rule it, or at least check her exodus.

Are the suffragists willing to do that?

Not at all. They are working to share the man's kingdom. If the woman's kingdom is to be restored and glorified the men must do it, and it must be done by politics and by religion.

By politics?

To be sure! The suffragists aim to improve the condition of women by politics, and think that women's votes would help vastly in doing so. It does not seem to me that they would, but whether there are to be women's votes or not, the improvement of the conditions of life, and with them the condition of women,

is the immediate aim and effort of contemporary politics everywhere. One reads in President Wilson's inaugural address:

"We have been proud of our industrial achievements, but we have not hitherto stopped thoughtfully enough to count the human cost, the cost of lives snuffed out, of energies overtaxed and broken, the fearful physical and spiritual cost to the men and women and children upon whom the dead weight and burden of it all have fallen pitilessly the years through."

It is to lighten and diffuse that dead weight and burden that that speaker and his supporters are dedicated. Success in that, if they achieve it, will mean political success and continuance in power; failure in

that will mean a failure in politics, and the transfer of power to other hands that must make this same relief the chief good that they practice to obtain. We have passed through a stage of national development when the chief good has seemed to the ablest minds to be the development of business, of transportation, of manufactures; the production of commodities, the construction of an enormous apparatus of civilization. Business has thriven; the railroads have been built, the apparatus has been constructed and commodities in unprecedented volume have been produced. Comes along now all this disquiet and unrest, spreading and increasing until it has come to be more important than gains for the gainful, or commodities for all hands;

until indeed it has become the subject that most engages statesmen's minds. The provision of bread and of bath tubs was never so great, but the people are not fed to their satisfaction, and cannot wash away their aches. They are not satisfied. There never was so efficient an apparatus of life. No one with any sense wants to make it less efficient or check its steady growth to meet increasing needs and cultivated wants. But now attention has been drawn away from apparatus to people. The chief problem is no longer "How can we get more machinery?" but how can the spirits of men be fed?—how can life be made sufficiently satisfying to the mass of the people to induce them to sustain the government?

It isn't at all a case of women

alone. It was not women's votes that turned the old Republican party out, or started the hammering of the trusts, the revision of the tariff and all the incidents of the new politics. It was a general revolt against a politico-industrial apparatus that seemed to have grown oppressive. There is a great problem to be solved in politics, but it is not disproportionately a woman-problem, and it will not be solved, disproportionately, by women. The woman problem is a part, and especially a symptom, of it. The woman's influence and thought will greatly affect the solution of it as they do of every human problem. But it has got to be worked out by the ablest political minds our country can produce, working continuously on it, and the ablest and least dis-

tracted minds for such matters are still the minds of the ablest men.

The disquiet of the women cannot be allayed separately by anything done for women. It is part of the general disturbance and can only be soothed by measures that will also pacify the rest of society. It should have many good effects. The driving of so many women out into the industrial world cannot, must not, fail of valuable results in training, in development, in demonstrated capacity for many new undertakings and employments. At least this great adventure of woman into the man's kingdom is giving to the world a new appreciation of her value, both in those activities into which she has been constrained to intrude, and in that domain from which, in so alarm-

ing a measure, she has been evicted. Women are freer and more powerful and doubtless happier as civilization progresses, as justice grows more kind and reasonable and intelligent and even, and force and brute strength count for less in the transactions of life. The interest of women is all for the development and perfection of civilization and the purification of politics. We have lots of votes now, amply enough to express every form of discontent. The need is not of more votes but of more dispassionate intelligence; not of more votes, but of knowing what to vote for.

But politics will never do the whole business of pacifying human life and making people content to live it. It never did: it will not now.

The great agent in that is religion. The great asset of our civilization, incomparably more important than all our astonishing apparatus for promoting physical comfort, is the mind of Christ. That mind penetrated all the perplexities of human relations and solved the problem of life in all its phases. It is on the spirit of Christ, working through individuals, and shaping and inspiring our politics, that we must count to straighten out the tangles in our affairs. That is the only force that is equal to so huge a task; that, working perpetually to bring justice, sanity and love into human concerns, can make men wise enough to be men and women patient enough to be women. That is the only force that can make labor duly tolerant of capi-

tal and capital duly considerate of labor; that can keep the spiritual in control of the material, and yet leave apparatus free to accumulate, and wealth to increase, and beauty to develop, and can bring liberty and opportunity to all creatures to work out all there is in them that is good.

And, since in our day the spirit of Christ is the great fountain of justice and liberty, it would be an impertinence for anyone to declare that it is opposed to votes for women. It is enough to say that it is patient, continuous and irresistible like the forces of nature, among which, to be sure, it must be reckoned. If the vote as a token of direct participation in politics is something of which woman has been unjustly deprived, then in the larger development and

ampler liberty that are coming to her she will get it. But if it is something that belongs to the man's part in life, an overrated power, offset by powers inalienably conferred upon her, then the demand for votes for women is a mistake, and in the long run will not prevail.

Either way it is not so big an item as it seems. The equality of women does not depend upon it, but rests on facts and functions that are just as operative where no one has a vote as where suffrage is universal. There is no woman's party; there is no man's party. All the women, suffragists and anti-suffragists, who are any worth to any cause are for man, and all the men who are worth anything to anybody are for woman, and there is nothing in life that is

more their business, or that more engages the attention of the best of them, than to see that she gets her dues,—all of them; all the liberty, opportunity, education and power that should be hers.

But however men may try to accomplish that, the result will always be imperfect, no matter what women may achieve. The assignment of belongings is very inexact in this world, and satisfaction is rare except as spiritual acquisition offsets material defect. That is where religion comes in, teaching and inspiring and consoling, lifting minds out of despair at faults and shortcomings of men, and bringing them the fortitude and confidence that come from faith in a great plan of a Creator.

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